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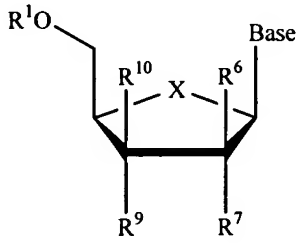
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-88 (canceled)

Claims 89 (currently amended): A method for the treatment ~~or prophylaxis~~ of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an anti-virally effective amount of a compound of Formula XVII:



(XVII)

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, wherein:

Base is a purine ~~or pyrimidine base as defined herein~~;

R^1 and R^2 are independently H; phosphate ~~(including monophosphate, diphosphate, triphosphate, or a stabilized phosphate prodrug)~~; a stabilized phosphate prodrug; acyl ~~(including lower acyl)~~; alkyl ~~(including lower alkyl)~~; sulfonate ester ~~including alkyl or arylalkyl sulfonyl including methanesulfonyl and~~; benzyl, wherein the phenyl group is optionally substituted with one or more substituents ~~as described in the definition of aryl given herein~~; a lipid~~,~~; ~~including a phospholipid~~; an amino acid; a carbohydrate; a peptide; a cholesterol; or other pharmaceutically acceptable leaving group which when administered *in vivo* is capable of providing a compound wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently H or phosphate;

R^6 is ~~hydrogen,~~ hydroxy, alkyl ~~(including lower alkyl),~~ azido, cyano, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), chloro, bromo, fluoro, iodo, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, or -N(acyl)$_2$;

R^7 and R^9 are independently hydrogen, OR^2, hydroxy, alkyl ~~(including lower alkyl)~~, azido, cyano, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), chlorine, bromine, iodine, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, or -N(acyl)$_2$;

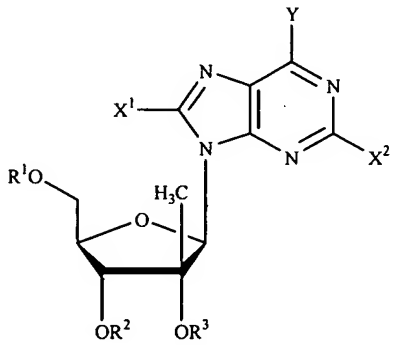
R^{10} is H, alkyl ~~(including lower alkyl)~~, chlorine, bromine or iodine;

alternatively, R^7 and R^9, or R^7 and R^{10} can come together to form a bond; and

X is O, S, SO_2 or CH_2.

Claims 90-129 (canceled)

Claim 130 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an anti-virally effective amount of a compound of Formula II:



(II)

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, wherein:

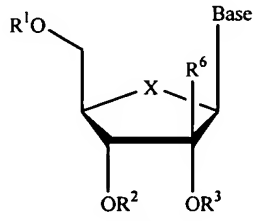
R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently H; phosphate or a stabilized phosphate prodrug; acyl; alkyl; sulfonate ester; or benzyl, wherein the phenyl group is optionally substituted with one or more substituents; a lipid; an amino acid; a carbohydrate; a peptide; cholesterol; or other pharmaceutically acceptable leaving group which when administered *in vivo* is capable of providing a compound wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently H or phosphate; and

Y is hydrogen, bromo, chloro, fluoro, iodo, OR^4, NR^4R^5 or SR^4;

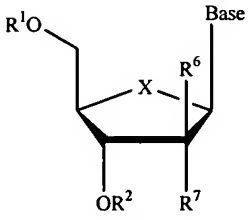
X^1 and X^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H, straight chained, branched or cyclic alkyl, CO-alkyl, CO-aryl, CO-alkoxyalkyl, chloro, bromo, fluoro, iodo, OR^4, NR^4NR^5 or SR^4; and

R^4 and R^5 are independently hydrogen, acyl, or alkyl.

Claim 131 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an anti-virally effective amount of a compound of Formula X or XI:



(X)



(XI)

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, wherein:

Base is a purine;

R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently H; phosphate or a stabilized phosphate prodrug; acyl; alkyl; sulfonate ester; or benzyl, wherein the phenyl group is optionally substituted; a lipid; an amino acid; a carbohydrate; a peptide; cholesterol; or other pharmaceutically acceptable leaving group which when administered *in vivo* is capable of providing a compound wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently H or phosphate;

R^6 is hydroxy, alkyl, azido, cyano, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), chloro, bromo, fluoro, iodo, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, or -N(acyl)$_2$;

R^7 is hydrogen, OR^3, hydroxy, alkyl, azido, cyano, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, -C(O)O(alkyl), -C(O)O(lower alkyl), -O(acyl), -O(lower acyl), -O(alkyl), -O(lower alkyl), -O(alkenyl), chlorine, bromine, iodine, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, or -N(acyl)$_2$; and

X is O, S, SO_2 or CH_2.

Claim 132 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, wherein, in the compound of Formula XVII:

R^{10} is H, alkyl, chlorine, bromine or iodine;
R^7 and R^9 are independently hydrogen, OR^2, alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, Br-vinyl, O-alkenyl, chlorine, bromine, iodine, NO_2, NH_2, -NH(lower alkyl), -NH(acyl), -N(lower alkyl)$_2$, or -N(acyl)$_2$;
R^6 is alkyl, chlorine, bromine or iodine;
alternatively, R^7 and R^9, or R^8 and R^9 can come together to form a bond; and
X is O, S, SO_2 or CH_2.

Claim 133 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^1 is hydrogen or phosphate.

Claim 134 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^2 is hydrogen, acyl or alkyl.

Claim 135 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^6 is alkyl.

Claim 136 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^7 and R^9 are independently hydrogen, OR^2, or hydroxy.

Claim 137 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^7 is hydroxy.

Claim 138 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^9 is hydroxy.

Claim 139 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^7 and R^9 are hydroxy.

Claim 140 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein R^{10} is hydrogen.

Claim 141 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein X is O.

Claim 142 (new): The method of claim 89 wherein
R^1 is hydrogen or phosphate;
R^2 is hydrogen, acyl or alkyl;
R^6 is alkyl;

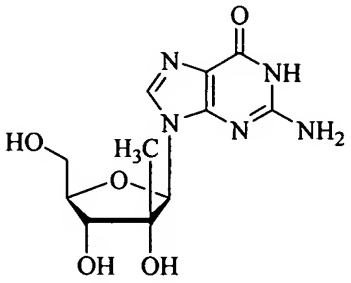
R^7 and R^9 are independently hydrogen, OR^2, or hydroxy;

R^{10} is hydrogen; and

X is O.

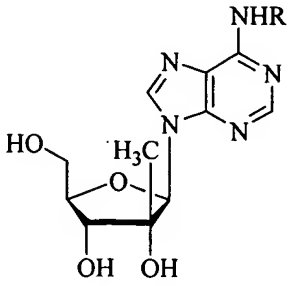
Claim 143 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the base is a purine selected from the group consisting of N^6-alkylpurines, N^6-acylpurines (wherein acyl is C(O)(alkyl, aryl, alkylaryl, or arylalkyl), N^6-benzylpurine, N^6-halopurine, N^6-vinylpurine, N^6-acetylenic purine, N^6-acyl purine, N^6-hydroxyalkyl purine, N^6-thioalkyl purine, N^2-alkylpurines, N^2-alkyl-6-thiopurines, N^2-alkylpurines, N^2-alkyl-6-thiopurines, 5-azacytidinyl, guanine, adenine, hypoxanthine, 2,6-diaminopurine, and 6-chloropurine.

Claim 144 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 145 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis c virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:

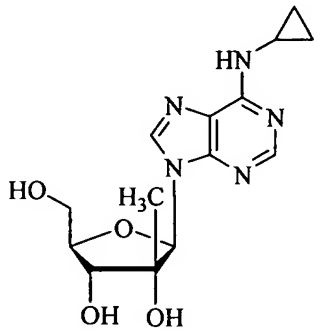


or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, wherein R is hydrogen or alkyl.

Claim 146 (new): The method of claim 196, wherein R is methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, or cyclopropyl.

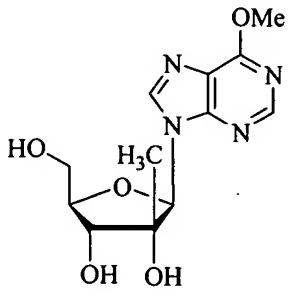
Claim 147 (new): The method of claim 196, wherein R is butyl, isobutyl, *t*-butyl, pentyl, cyclopentyl, isopentyl, or neopentyl.

Claim 148 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



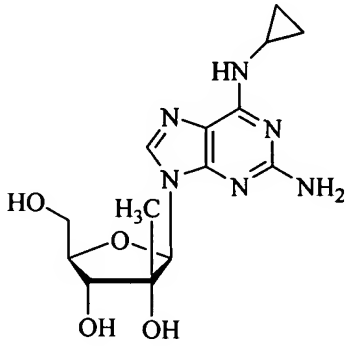
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 149 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



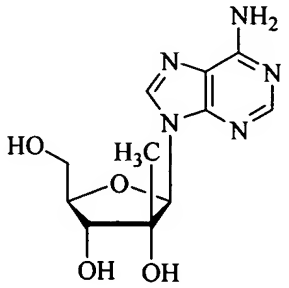
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 150 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



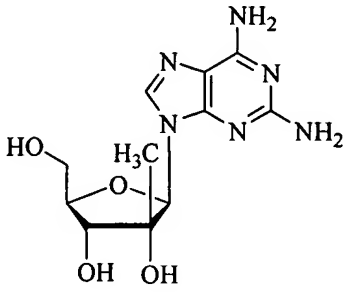
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 151 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



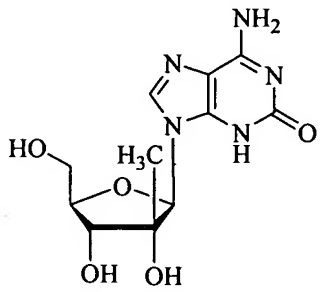
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 152 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



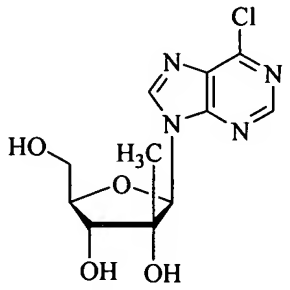
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 153 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



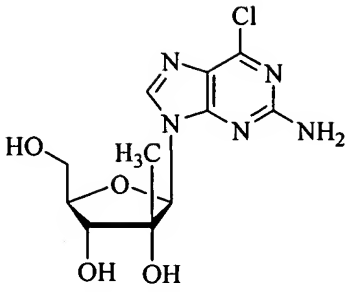
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 154 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



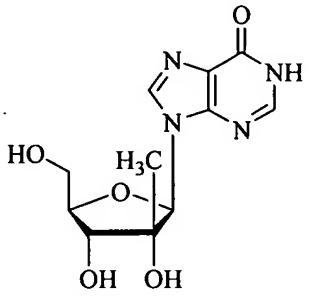
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 155 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



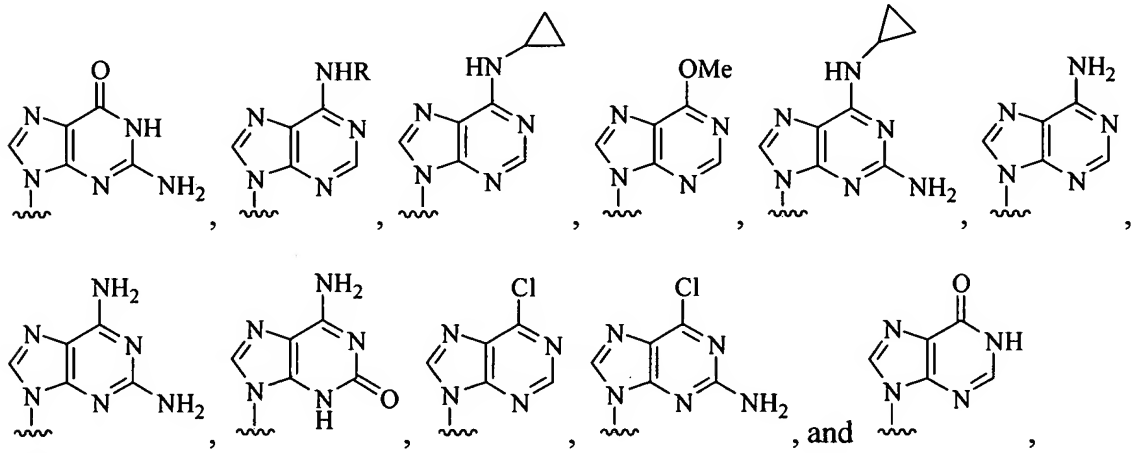
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 156 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising administering an antivirally effective amount of a compound of the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claim 157 (new): The method of claim 89 for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, wherein the purine base is selected from the group consisting of



wherein R

is methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, butyl, isobutyl, *t*-butyl, pentyl, cyclopentyl, isopentyl, or neopentyl.

Claim 158 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the method comprises administering the compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof in combination or alternation with a second anti-hepatitis C virus agent.

Claim 159 (new): The method of claim 158, wherein the second anti-hepatitis C virus agent is selected from the group consisting of consisting of interferon, ribavirin, a protease inhibitor, a thiazolidine derivative, a polymerase inhibitor, and a helicase inhibitor.

Claim 160 (new): The method of claim 159, wherein the second anti-hepatitis C virus agent is interferon.

Claim 161 (new): The method of claim 159, wherein the second anti-hepatitis C virus agent is a protease inhibitor.

Claim 162 (new): The method of claim 159, wherein the second anti-hepatitis C virus agent is ribavirin.

Claim 163 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the compound is in the form of a dosage unit.

Claim 164 (new): The method of claim 163, wherein the dosage unit contains 50 to 1000 mg of said compound.

Claim 165 (new): The method of claim 163, wherein said dosage unit is a tablet or capsule.

Claim 166 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the host is a human.

Claim 167 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the compound is in substantially pure form.

Claim 168 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the compound is at least 90% by weight of the β-D-isomer.

Claim 169 (new): The method of claim 89, wherein the compound is at least 95% by weight of the β-D-isomer.